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over the disclosure of Hernandez et al in combination with Vail (US3816486), is not reiterated in the Final Office Action and is thus considered withdrawn.

The Examiner's response to the Applicants arguments against these rejections is to refer to page 12, lines 12-23, of Casey et al for the proposition that Casey et al discloses a second stage drawing under wet conditions. The Applicants respectfully submit that the Examiner has taken this disclosure of Casey et al out of context.

Specifically, the Applicants would point to the following statement of Casey et al from the passage cited by the Examiner (at lines 16-19):

"If desired, the second draw stage is hotter than the first draw stage up to a practical maximum of the melting point of the yarn, preferably 60 to 160°C...."

It is not understood how, at the melting point of the yarn (or at 160°C), the second stage draw could occur under wet conditions, as a water bath would boil at those temperatures.

Casey et al, therefore, does not disclose (and certainly does not unambiguously disclose) that both drawing steps (when more than one drawing step is used) are conducted under "wet conditions" within the meaning of the presently claimed invention.

It is also unclear (at best) whether or not Casey et al even discloses processing conditions specifically applied to aged undrawn PTT fibers as required by the present claims. Even if Casey et al disclosed the remote possibility of running a second draw step under wet conditions, there is thus nothing to lead the person of ordinary skill in the art to choose this operating parameter along with all the others required by the present claims in order to achieve the solution of the present invention.

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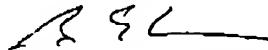
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Conclusion

In view of the above arguments, and arguments of record, the Applicants submit that claims 1-30 are patentable over the art of record, and respectfully request allowance of the claims as currently pending and advancement of the present application to issue at the earliest possible date.

Respectfully submitted,



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